



Inside CFSA



For Our Child-Serving Community

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Generous Community Brightens Holidays for More Than 1,000 Kids

Tiara is the youngest of four siblings ranging in age from five to 13, and all of them are dreaming of more than just a snowy white holiday. This year, Tiara hopes Santa will deliver a big red dog named Clifford; a Power Puff Girl doll; and a red hat, scarf, and mittens that match. Her siblings' wish lists include watches, basketballs, football jerseys, and roller skates. For many local children, the "Season to be Jolly" unquestionably means a turkey dinner, special treats, and mountains of wrapped packages under a lavishly decorated tree. However, the holiday wishes of Tiara and her family will come true this year only because a caring community has reached out in the true spirit of the season.



Over the next few days, CFSA will deliver contributions from more than 60 thoughtful, generous donors directly to hundreds of the children and families we serve. As a result, Tiara and her siblings will benefit from either our annual gift drive or one of several parties community organizations are hosting for over 1,100 children and teens. As of this date, big-hearted donors have provided almost 3,000 toys and other gifts for CFSA to distribute.

On Dec. 7, **Mayor Anthony A. Williams and the Washington Wizards and Mystics** hosted a holiday party for foster children at Dave & Busters in Bethesda. Much to the children's delight, the Mystics' Annie Burgess and Chamique Holdsclaw and the Wizards' Gilbert Arenas and Jerry Stackhouse greeted them at the door. During the fun-filled afternoon, the kids played games and heard stories.

In addition, the **Bethune-DuBois Institute, Children's Hospital, Contee AME Zion Church, Howard University National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Prince Hall Shriners, and Washington Metropolitan Area Chef Association & Epicurean Society** already have hosted or will host separate parties for thousands of the District's disadvantaged children. Community support is providing special activities and gift baskets for CFSA children and families right through Dec. 25, when the **Alpha Omega Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.** will deliver food to 30 families.

"Many children, teens, and families would not have any extras for the holidays without all the wonderful gifts and activities this community provides," said Beatrice Williar, manager, CFSA Volunteer Services. "On behalf of CFSA and all our social workers, we are deeply grateful for each and every donation."

Contract Reform Moves Ahead

On Nov. 24, CFSA released the Family-based Care Request For Proposals (RFP), the second global RFP issued under the contract reform initiative launched in August 2002. CFSA is seeking to align services we purchase from contractors more closely with the core values of safety, permanence, and well being for children. In August, CFSA released an RFP for quality services for youth in congregate care. CFSA is now evaluating 46 offers plans to be ready to award contracts early in 2004.

The Family-based Care RFP seeks to provide over 1,100 CFSA children whose cases are managed by outside contractors with family foster care settings that promote continued connection to siblings, parents, extended family members, and communities. CFSA envisions care and services linked at the neighborhood level in communities where families and children live. A community-based system enhances the well being of children and families by reducing the trauma of foster care separation and increasing the potential for reunification with biological parents and support from extended family members. A community-based approach also effectively links children, biological families, and caregivers to a network of formal and informal organizations in their neighborhoods that can continue to support them after the child welfare system is no longer involved.

The deadline for proposals for family-based care is Jan. 15. For further information, contact CFSA Contracts & Procurement, (202) 724-5300, or visit our website at www.cfsa.dc.gov and click on Contract Opportunities.

CFSA Adoptable Children on the Web

Whether in the District or far-flung locations, prospective adoptive parents can now view pictures and profiles of local adoptable children at www.cfsa.dc.gov. A new page on CFSA's website features seven children and will be updated quarterly. The website also has links to national adoption websites that feature District children. For information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, call (202) 671-LOVE. ■

CFSA Public Information faxes this newsletter monthly to providers and other partners. To provide comments or to update your fax number, call (202) 442-6015. Editor: Derek Stewart ■